15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
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361 of carapace scattered in the sand justified the island's reputation for good turtle hunting.

Camps like this have been in use for centuries, and around several of them are hundreds of tons of shells, bones, and refuse. One mound in the Crocodile Islands is over twenty [172] feet high and covers an area of approximately five hundred square yards; when an experimental cut was made into the centre, it was found to consist entirely of shellfish shells.

341 Camp shelters are the crudest imaginable. Prince Petr Kropotkin goes so far as to say that aborigines live in holes in the sand; and as in the case of many misrepresentations, there is some truth in his statement. When the wind is light they scoop up the sand on the windward side and sleep in the depression beside a smouldering fire, and if the wind is cold, a thick wind-break is pushed into the sand. Why should they go to more trouble when they move off the following morning?

In the rainy season nomads become uncomfortably cold and wet and build more elaborate shelters of sticks covered [824] with paper-bark, or of bark from the stringy-bark eucalypt, curved inside out, so that when a number of curved sheets are placed side by side they look like miniature tunnels. Roomy and easily rearranged, these 'balas' suit the winds and rain and sometimes last for the duration of the wet season.

●364 Yulengor have no knowledge of sanitation, and they are [361] never in one camp long enough for this form of cleanliness to be forced on them. Refuse and leaves are shovelled on pieces of bark and thrown by the entrance. In cold wet weather shells and food are cooked inside the shelter, and all kinds of waste are thrown on the rapidly increasing midden at the doorway. To camp amidst one's own filth is not regarded as unclean. Before the middens at old camps become overpowering or germinate an exterminating

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
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disease, scarcity of food compels the occupants to look for fresh sites.

Well-defined tracks link food-gathering areas and meander in or around jungles and along swamps and creeks wherever there is good hunting. Accompanied by a couple of aboriginal families and a few boys, I followed one of these tracks for about forty miles to where a distant horde had migrated. Men went ahead with their spears, and the women followed with young children, family possessions, and food-gathering dilly-bags. Every little while there was an outbreak of squealing from the women and yelping from the dogs, as a bush rat or other animal was dragged from a hollow log or tree. Occasionally a woman darted off from the track and some miles farther on rejoined the party with a bundle of edible roots or yams.

By sundown we left the bush and came out on a sandy beach on the northern shores of Port Bradshaw, and men and boys were soon lying on the sand waiting for the women to prepare the camps, dig in the sand for fresh water, and cook the shellfish. Once the food was ready, the women took it to their husbands, who shared it with unmarried companions. Darkness comes quickly in the north, and married men settled down with their wives and children around their separate family fires, whilst the unattached males discreetly camped some distance away. Unmarried men always separate themselves from family groups, and any visiting males temporarily without wives stay with the bachelors. Not infrequently married men determine where the bachelors' camp is to be made, and with vivid memories of their own youthful and indiscriminate ways, rigorously enforce this segregation. In the bush, ever-courteous nomads reserved a place for me beside the young men's fire, but never anywhere near a family group, although the youths have sometimes been strangers and the married families well known to me.